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ABSTRACT

This fact sheet from "The Condition of Education, 1999" presents information on the racial and ethnic characteristics of U.S. elementary and secondary school students derived from Census figures. Thirty-six percent of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in 1996 were considered members of a minority group, an increase of 12 percentage points from 1976. This increase was largely the result of growth in the percentage of Hispanic students. Since 1970, black students have accounted for approximately one in three students in the central cities. In 1996, 10% of public school students living in the metropolitan area outside a central city were black, up from 6% in 1970. Approximately 1 in 4 students in central cities was Hispanic in 1996, up from approximately 1 in 10 students in 1972. The percentages of Black and Hispanic students enrolled in private schools increased between 1972 and 1996, rising from 5% each in 1972 to 9% for Blacks and 8% for Hispanics in 1996. (Contains one table and two graphs.) (SLD)

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RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS

**National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Indicator of the Month
February 2000**

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February 2000

Racial and ethnic distribution of elementary and secondary students

Changes in the racial-ethnic composition of students may alter the degree of heterogeneity of language and culture in the Nation's schools. Although variety in student backgrounds and interests can enhance the learning environment, it can also create new or increased challenges for the schools. Knowledge of the shifting racial-ethnic distribution of public elementary and secondary students can give schools the foresight to plan for these challenges.

- Thirty-six percent of students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools were considered part of a minority group in 1996, an increase of 12 percentage points from 1976. This increase was largely due to the growth in the percentage of Hispanic students.
- Since 1970, black students have accounted for approximately one out of every three students who lived in central cities and attended public schools. In 1996, 10 percent of the students who lived in a metropolitan area outside of a central city and who attended public schools were black, up from 6 percent in 1970.
- In 1996, approximately one out of every four students who lived in a central city and who attended public schools was Hispanic, up from approximately 1 out of every 10 students in 1972.
- The percentage of black and Hispanic students enrolled in private schools increased between 1972 and 1996, rising from 5 percent each for both black and Hispanic students in 1972 to 9 percent for black students and 8 percent for Hispanic students in 1996.

Percentage of students in grades 1-12 who were black or Hispanic, by control of school and place of residence: 1970-96

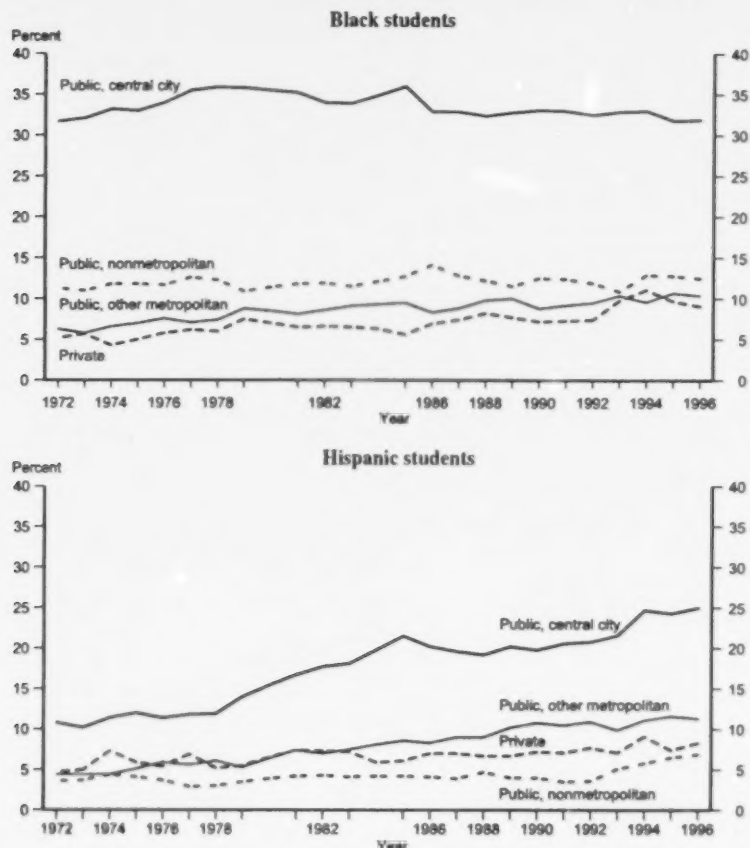
Year	Black					Hispanic				
	Public schools					Public schools				
	Total	Central city	Other metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	Private schools	Total	Central city	Other metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	Private schools
1970	14.8	32.5	6.2	12.0	4.7	—	—	—	—	—
1972	14.9	31.7	6.3	11.3	5.2	5.8	10.8	4.4	3.6	4.7
1974	15.4	33.2	6.6	11.8	4.3	6.2	11.4	4.4	4.4	7.3
1976	16.0	34.0	7.6	11.7	5.8	6.6	11.4	5.9	3.7	5.4
1978	16.1	35.9	7.4	12.3	6.0	6.4	11.9	6.1	3.0	5.2
1979	16.1	35.8	8.8	10.9	7.5	6.8	14.0	5.3	3.5	5.5
1982	16.2	34.0	8.6	11.9	6.6	8.7	17.7	7.0	4.3	7.3
1985	17.0	36.0	9.5	12.7	5.6	10.1	21.5	8.6	4.2	6.1
1986	16.7	32.9	8.3	14.1	6.9	10.6	20.2	8.3	4.1	7.0
1988	16.8	32.4	9.8	12.2	8.2	10.8	19.2	9.0	4.7	6.7
1990	16.5	33.1	8.8	12.5	7.2	11.6	19.8	10.8	4.0	7.2
1991	16.7	33.0	9.2	12.4	7.3	11.7	20.6	10.5	3.5	7.1
1992	16.7	32.5	9.5	11.9	7.4	11.9	20.8	10.9	3.6	7.7
1993	16.7	32.9	10.4	10.9	9.8	11.9	21.6	9.9	5.1	7.1
1994	16.8	33.0	9.6	12.9	11.1	13.4	24.7	11.1	5.8	9.1
1995	17.1	31.8	10.7	12.8	9.7	14.0	24.3	11.6	6.5	7.4
1996	17.0	31.9	10.4	12.5	9.1	14.3	25.0	11.3	6.9	8.3

— Not available.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) definition of metropolitan areas in the United States was changed in 1985. For data through 1984, metropolitan areas were defined on the basis of the 1970 census. A small number of students were both black and Hispanic (less than 1 percent). In 1994, the survey instrument for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, "Level of Enrollment Below College for Persons 3 to 24 Years Old, by Control of School, Metropolitan Status, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," various years; and October Current Population Surveys.

**Percentage of students in grades 1-12 who were black or Hispanic,
by control of school and place of residence: 1972-96**



NOTE: Control of school was not available in 1980. Residence of students was not available in 1984. The Current Population Survey (CPS) definition of metropolitan areas in the United States was changed in 1985. A small number of students (less than 1 percent) were both black and Hispanic. In 1994, the survey instrument for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, "Level of Enrollment Below College for Persons 3 to 24 Years Old, by Control of School: Metropolitan Status, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," various years; and October Current Population Surveys.

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